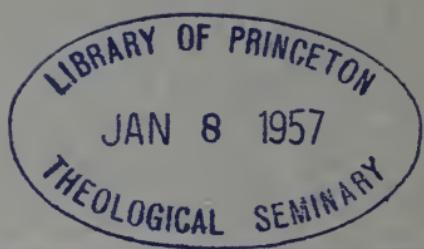


Handbook of Work with
Student Enquirers in India

H. A. Walter, M.A., B.D.



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Handbook of Work With Student Enquirers in India

A SYMPOSIUM

EDITED BY

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Association, Lahore.*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAP.						PAGE
	PREFACE
I.	TEACHER AND PUPIL	9
II.	CLASS OR INDIVIDUAL	14
III.	DIFFICULTIES—PEDAGOGICAL	...	...	...	...	18
IV.	STUDY OF THE BIBLE	...	...	...	...	26
V.	REFERENCE TO OTHER RELIGIONS	...	...	...	...	36
VI.	DIFFICULTIES—THEOLOGICAL	...	...	...	...	44
VII.	THE FINAL DECISION	...	...	...	...	62
VIII.	LITERATURE FOR THE ENQUIRER	...	...	...	...	70

PREFACE

THE *raison d'etre* of this little book is to be found in the desire of a group of younger missionaries, engaged in personal work among Indian students, to profit by the mature and tested experience of those who have been most diligent and successful in this vitally important form of missionary labour in the past. A comprehensive questionnaire was sent to about a score of leading Christian workers among Indian students, and the replies subsequently received proved to be so valuable that it was felt that the substance of them should be made available for a larger circle. Several of the sets of answers were so fully and carefully prepared as to deserve separate publication, entire, but since that is not feasible it has been the Editor's effort, in sifting and collating the material, to preserve all that is essential and original in each, while stressing particularly those points made specially significant by general agreement.

The fulness of quotation and variety of view-point entailed by this method has made the book less unified and perhaps less readable than would have been the case if a more thorough amalgamation and interpretation of the material had been attempted. However, the purpose of the Editor has been to provide a handbook of the results of tested experience in this field to which may be referred, for purposes of comparison and interpretation, the experiences of the new missionary or the Indian Christian worker who may find the book useful in such a capacity. The subject

dealt with in Chapter VI requires an entire book for even an introductory treatment. All that could be attempted here has been to sketch the lines of argument which contributors to this symposium have found most cogent in dealing with a few of the large number of theological difficulties which the Christian teacher in India must seek to resolve for his pupils. The bibliography in the last chapter may open the way to a fuller treatment. Several friends whose contributions to the Symposium were desired and sought were prevented for some reason from assisting.

The names of those contributing are appended, and reference will be made to them hereafter by the letter preceding the name :—

- A—C. F. Andrews, Esq., M.A., Bolpur.
- B—Prof. Arthur C. Boggess, PH.D., Reid Christian College, Lucknow.
- C—Rev. J. R. Chitambar, M.A., Pithorogarh, Kumaon, U. P.
- E—Editor, *Epiphany*, Oxford Mission, Calcutta.
- F—J. N. Farquhar, Esq., M.A., Literary Secretary, National Council, Young Men's Christian Association, Calcutta.
- H¹—J. G. Harley, Esq., M.A., late Student Secretary, Young Men's Christian Association, Lahore.
- H²—Rev. W. E. S. Holland, M.A., Principal, St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College, Calcutta.
- H³—Rev. W. H. G. Holmes, M.A., Oxford Mission Medical Hostel, Calcutta.
- J—Rev. A. E. Johnston, B.D., late of the Church Missionary Society, Benares.
- M—Rev. J. Mathers, M.A., Young Men's Christian Association, Bangalore.
- P¹—Rev. A. C. Pelly, Oxford and Cambridge Hostel, Allahabad.
- P²—T. R. Ponsford, Esq., Student Branch, Young Men's Christian Association, Bombay.
- S¹—K. J. Saunders, Esq., M.A., Young Men's Christian Association, Students' Hostel, Rangoon.

S²—Prof. R. Siraj-ud-din, B.A., Forman Christian College, Lahore.

S³—Rev. F. W. Steinthal, B.D., Scandinavian Lutheran Mission to the Santals, Behar.

T—Prof. C. D. Thompson, Jr., Ewing Christian College, Allahabad.

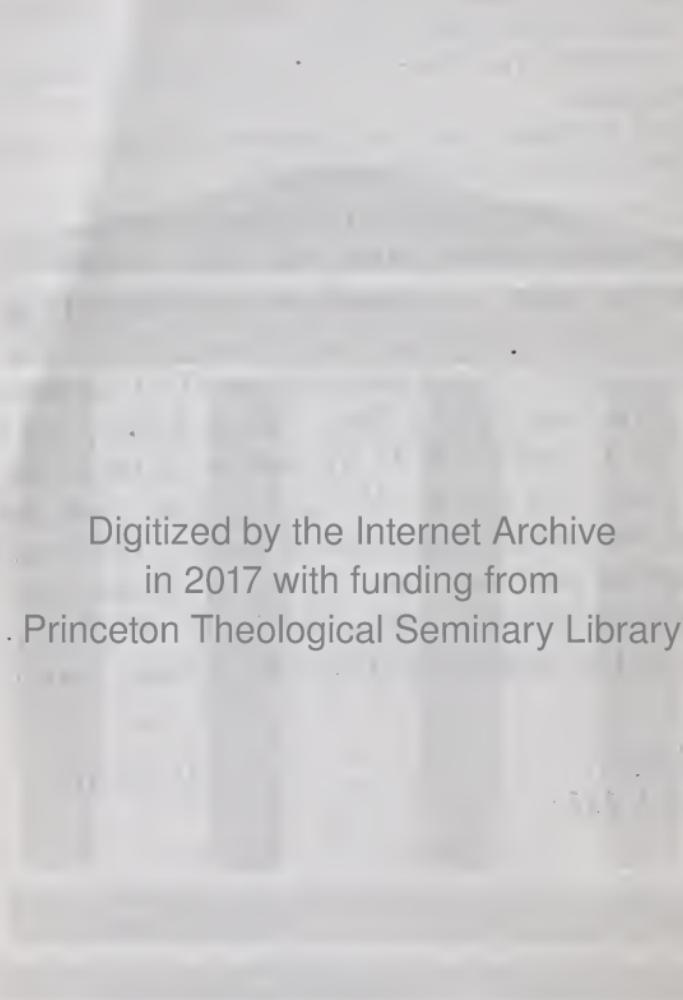
W—E. C. Worman, Esq., M.A., Student Secretary, Young Men's Christian Association, Madras.

In addition to the material furnished by the above contributors, some further matter has been included at various points, where it seemed to the Editor to be required.

Acknowledgment should be made to W. J. McKee, Esq., C.E., principal of Rang Mahal School, Lahore; and to Messrs. K. T. Paul and R. D. Whitehorn, of the Indian National Council of the Y. M. C. A.; who read the manuscript and offered suggestions of value. The particulars regarding publishers and prices of books mentioned in the last chapter were added by D. W. Peterson, Esq., of the Association Press, 86, College Street, Calcutta.

*Srinagar,
July 23rd, 1915.*

H. A. W.



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CHAPTER I.

Teacher and Pupil

STRICTLY speaking, the relation subsisting between the missionary and the enquirer is not that of official teacher and pupil, but rather of friend with friend. The missionary has to communicate not so much a definite set of teachings as a Life: and that cannot be done only in an hour or two, each week, of formal meeting for Bible study. The spiritual background of those hours must be in the teacher himself, a rich, strong, Spirit-filled personality, and in his relations with each individual student, a ripening friendship, in which many meetings and mutual interests are involved.

With regard to the importance of the teacher's primary cultivation of his own garden, M writes :—
" In all work with educated Indians it is not the power of thought but the power of a full developed personality that is the central force in every type of work with these men. Our thinking, of course, is important, but unless we can give ourselves, first of all, our thought will not penetrate far. It seems to me that India has, unfortunately, developed her high religious thought on lines which ever-increasingly narrow the personal powers of men, and that our religion stands for the full development of personality in social and religious relations. The more we develop personality in ourselves and others, the more we shall be doing for educated India."

Regarding the teacher's relationship to the student:—
" The teacher must know his man's daily life and his

man" (H¹). B emphasizes this primary need of gaining the affection of the men we seek to aid by inviting them to our homes and by visiting them in theirs—especially in times of illness or trouble. C further urges the necessity of winning "the love and confidence of pupils, by being in personal touch with them and by giving them the assurance in every possible way that the teacher is their true, sympathetic friend, and not a stiff pedagogue."

A further most important element of the work, which lies outside of the formal time of meeting, consists in prayerful preparation. "I believe in praying for all my students by name, and also praying for the lesson I am going to teach. The teacher should ask for divine guidance in presenting the message, and should himself be in very close personal touch with God. Not his dogmatic or stereotyped teaching, but his spirit and personality counts in his work as a Christian teacher" (C).

In the interview, or class, likewise, prayer will have the foremost place. "Pray with the enquirer. Get him to pray regularly by himself" (F). "I always begin with prayer, trying to pray in a way in which the man can join" (H²).

"Pray without ceasing. Let prayer have its place in each interview, and let each interview have its place in our prayer. It helps the *guru* no less than the enquirer to do his work in the presence of God; it saves time by discarding too much loose talk; it sifts the enquirers, tiring the irreligious, who are not wanted; it marks progress, leading the earnest enquirer gradually into the personal prayer life" (S²).

The aim of the teacher while with the enquirer is thus concisely defined: "*Make Jesus living.* By whatever

ways and methods used, it must always be the ultimate aim to bring the enquirer into the right personal attitude to Christ and to make Christ a living, personal reality to the enquirer" (S²). H¹ gives his "way and method" thus definitely:—"Information and common service are the combined keynote of my method of evangelism. You must have the thirst before you satisfy it. Information meets the desire for knowledge. Service follows that, and awakens capacity and desire for the satisfaction of the soul's needs. And, through all, the recollection, 'You can take a horse to the water, but *you can't* make him drink.' It is ours to create, awaken if you like, the thirst, and provide means of satisfying it. But no more. We spoil all if we *insist* on satisfying."

As a typical method of procedure with an enquirer, it may be helpful to give in full the one detailed by T.

"In individual work, my general plan of action is as follows:—

"1. Find out how God, or religion, influences the man's life, whether he feels a need of divine help for himself or for India. If not, try to arouse such a feeling of need.

"2. Find out exactly what the man believes. Most of them do not know what they believe. If so, help them to determine what they believe. In so doing, it is often possible to establish a really Christian point of view to build on.

"3. When the present belief is determined, emphasize the points of agreement, and build on these. Show that the good they long for, for themselves and for India, can never be obtained without Christ. No other offers a practical plan of practical living for all classes, which He Himself, and His followers, of all classes, men, women and children, wise and ignorant, have followed, and

which is yet scientific and efficient, and permits of infinite progress and evolution both of the individual and of the race. There is no other name under heaven, given among men, by which you *must* be saved.

“4. Whenever the man is willing, *pray*, and *get him to pray*. Many Hindus and Muhammadans will pray in the name of Christ. Prayer is the great power over men’s souls. Make them ask God to show them the truth more clearly than you can. Bring them before God and let Him deal with them. Teach them that they can come directly to God: the intervention of no priest is necessary.”

W adds a word worth heeding. “Get hold of *young* men. The last two years in the high school, I believe, are the most impressionable.”

The following general advice, given by S³, will fittingly sum up and conclude this introductory chapter:—

“*Keep Your Door Open.* Let no enquirer ever feel that he is unwelcome. I never refused any enquirer who wanted to read with me, but many have withdrawn of their own accord after a short time, when they found it too serious. Any officialism with business hours, hurried engagements, complaints of wasted time, etc., are sure to drive the best men away and appear to them as unspiritual and unfriendly. If you have a home, and a wife who knows how to talk with Indians, it will always be a valued privilege for them to see her, and now and then to have a cup of tea in her company.

“*Keep Your Ears Open.* The more you come to know of your man, his private and family life, his past and present, the better you will be able to understand and guide him. An enquirer’s interview should never be felt as a lesson to be given, but as a friendly

talk, with some opportunity before or after the study (not interrupting it) for a friendly chat.

“Keep Your Heart Open. Let the enquirer always feel that you care for him, ‘that you love him so much’ as he will tell others. Take him with you to church (we often fail to lead the enquirers into regular participation in Christian service, which is a great drawback); take him with you for walks; visit him in his mess or home, if he invites you, but never without asking him, as it may cause him trouble. However, it is more important that you should share his life than that you let him share yours.

“Keep Your Bible Open. I seldom have an interview without having the Bible open; it keeps me to the point; it prevents the conversation from getting off on a tangent; it impresses the enquirer with the fact that we are messengers with a greater authority behind us. I begin by preparing for each interview, to be sure that I know what to bring out; of course this can only be done in the beginning. But it is not at all bad, in order to keep our mind and our words fresh, to prepare new courses, or go over old ground with new commentaries, or from a new view-point. The more we live in the Bible, the more it will continue to be a new book to us and a living book to the enquirer.

“Keep in the Light. The enquirer inquires not only into the Christian religion, but into our lives, and he usually sees more than we think. Not what we say, but what we are, is the most convincing testimony to the truth of the message we have to bring. If we are always in the presence of God the enquirer is most likely to find the way by our hand.”

CHAPTER II.

Class or Individual

PERHAPS it is true of Indian enquirers to an extent not equalled in any other country, that the most successful work, at least in the later stages of Christian instruction, will be done in private. Writes S³: "Class work can never take the place of personal work. Indian enquirers must be dealt with one by one. Even where two or more friends have to read together it has seldom proved a success." Similarly E writes: "Always teach individuals alone. An Indian in company with other Indians, learning, and an Indian alone are very different persons." And others testify: "Work with individual non-Christians is far more profitable than work in a class. I would rather have six men reading privately than twenty men in three or four classes" (P²); "one half hour with a lad alone is worth many hours with a class" (H³); "we fail by being rushed: the quiet hour with an individual means far more than a running pass at the men in a group" (W); "pray about the men. Be content with giving time and thought to a few. I increasingly believe in not casting pearls before swine. Let us specialise in those who are real enquirers. Individual work pays" (P¹); "some men have been brought out merely by class work and lectures, but as a rule I think individual work far more effective, especially to supplement class work. One must know each individual's questions and doubts, and these cannot be stated publicly. I would

emphasize the importance of individual work, and the fact that time so spent is never lost. Compare Christ with Nicodemus and with the Samaritan woman" (T).

Unquestionably, viewed from the stand-point of the importance of individual prayer, which is accented so continuously throughout these papers, there is corresponding need of individual teaching, with the increased opportunity, thus afforded, of coming to know the personal equation of the individual student and entering helpfully into his desires and problems. And this need of individual teaching will deepen in proportion as the student advances in his appropriation of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Nevertheless, many of the papers indicate that it would not be desirable, even were it possible, to dispense entirely with classes in which groups of enquirers meet together for study. When one contemplates the large number of enquirers gathered in as a result of the evangelistic efforts of Messrs. Mott and Eddy in the chief cities of India in 1912-13, for example, one must realize the need of preliminary classes in dealing with such large groups of men—both because of the lack of time, on the part of teachers, and of the disinclination on the part of many of the alleged enquirers for individual work. Men, timid or but slightly influenced, will go in a crowd where they will not go, in conspicuous eminence, alone. And that is the teacher's opportunity—to lead them further and, if need be, to apply some sifting process to the crowd. As W writes: "A group or class is valuable in enabling one to pick his men for individual work and imparting general Bible information." S³ expands the same idea. "The Bible class is an indispensable part of enquirers' work. It gathers many who would not think

of coming individually; it is a practical way of giving systematic courses in Bible knowledge, whether for examination purpose or not; and it is the open door through which many, who have come from curiosity, or to improve their English, or to make the European's acquaintance, have been led to personal enquiry. I have got some of my best enquirers in that way." H² balances the respective merits of class and individual work as follows:—"Class teaching gives one greater opportunity for the (emotional) appeal to conscience and will. Personal dealing gets you nearer the man, and avoids the attitude of opposition with which two Hindus inspire one another: the desire to show themselves 'opposed,' and uninfluenced." S¹ makes the novel and thought-provoking suggestion of a customary division of labour, where a Western and an Indian Christian are working together and where circumstances permit. He writes:—"I think class-work is preferable as a preliminary: then private talks and study. I believe class-work is healthier with Indian students. They have a tendency to relish private interviews, which very often lead no whither—but this varies in different localities. I should recommend being accessible at all times *for real business*: but insist on a man who comes repeatedly for 'chats' joining a class and doing steady work. It is much better to entrust such a man to an earnest Indian Christian student than to let him become one's own 'chela,' in my opinion. I think Westerners are better at class-work and Indians at personal work. Students who have been baptized have come out of classes, and only at the end wanted personal talks—and then chiefly to arrange for baptism. I am thinking of some fifteen or twenty men, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-two, and in all cases it was the *cumu-*

lative effect of class-work and preaching which brought them to decision."

Perhaps the best single summary of this perplexing subject is given by H¹. "Where class work is possible, it is the readiest means, and least wasteful, of giving a knowledge of Christian principles, working through a Gospel, and doing the simple explaining possible. Real difficulties must come out. Hang on to the real ones, for detailed treatment at regular intervals, but do not take a big question when the lesson for the day is not fully covered. Most big questions find their own answer before the end of the Book. Attention should be drawn when this is done. Exactness, writing down, is very important, for each member as well as the leader. Class work gives a sense of fellowship in growth. To get this, there must be a real bond of understanding and helpfulness between teacher and taught—companions on the same road. Individual reading is the crown and test of good class work. It *must* result from the class. In the Punjab, class work without 'showing off' on the part of members is sometimes difficult to get, and useless thus. Yet it is a second best not to go as far as one can with a group, before the individual realizes his individual difficulties."

CHAPTER III.

Difficulties—Pedagogical

IN teaching Indian students it is especially true that “we have to do with individual souls, not with types or classes of men, and each man must be met on his own grounds and dealt with according to his special needs” (T). Nevertheless, since in all classes of society certain types of mind are to be distinguished, the teacher cannot but find a knowledge of the type helpful in diagnosing the individual case. And only as we understand the man, and the mind, confronting us will our presentation of the Gospel, under God, find acceptance. Only long experience can familiarise the missionary with the types of enquirers in India, as well as with the peculiar difficulties involved in teaching them. In the case of Muhammadan enquirers, the three leading types have been helpfully described by S², who understands them well. “I should say that I have met with at least three distinctive types of enquirers among Muhammadans. There is first the ‘Literalist,’ the man who argues and fights about ‘words’ and ‘constructions’ and minute details, perhaps choosing some unimportant statement or Biblical verse as a target for his remarks. Then there is the better informed ‘Controversialist,’ who argues on rational lines and is conversant with the facts and stories of the Scriptures. He often comes with misconceived ideas and wrong interpretations of his own or of others. Lastly, there is what might be termed the ‘Fundamentalist,’ the ‘Essentialist,’ the ‘Spiritual Enquirer,’ who has learnt to distinguish between the

fundamental principles and the less important particular application of principles." The paper goes on to indicate the method of approach to each class. "In dealing with the enquirer of the first type, the 'Literalist,' the object should be to get him to see the unreasonableness of his procedure, and to get him to pass on to the more rational controversy, finally to bring him to the consideration of the fundamentals. In dealing with the enquirer of the second type, the more rational 'Controversialist,' it is helpful to make a comparative study of the Bible and the Koran, and to show him the scantiness, the scrappy nature, the unhistorical and unchronological treatment of the Scripture narratives by the Koran, as well as to show how largely the Koran is indebted to the Christian Scriptures for all its history and for most of what is best in it. The third type of enquirer is the most hopeful and the easiest to deal with. With such a one I would be as unreserved and free as in speaking to a real Christian. He comes with the same longings, aspirations, and frame of mind as a real Christian, because the self-same spirit has been working in his life."

Regarding the Hindu enquirer, the same correspondent makes the following note:—"As to Hindu enquirers, a Hindu of the 'Literalist' type is perhaps more rare. But one of a 'Controversialist' type is so much the more common. The object here should be to get him to change his 'point of view.' His values on religion are based on 'Speculation' and 'Wisdom.' He is to be made to see that true values in religion are in terms of 'Life,' 'Holiness' and 'Power.' The spiritually-minded Hindu does not differ from the spiritually-minded Muhammadan."

As a rule, in ordinary reading with enquirers, probably the less distinction made between students of different religions the better. "I have made no distinction with Muhammadans and Hindus in selecting parts. There is a difference in individuals, but it is hardly capable of arbitrary statement as to the difference being due to religious up-bringing in different communities. For practical purposes I have always assumed the enquirer to have far more in common with his fellowmen than of variance, and this common ground has been the starting point" (H¹).

Coming to an enumeration and brief discussion of certain common characteristics of student enquirers, which may constitute pit-falls for the innocent teacher, the following are variously mentioned by different correspondents.

1. *Cant*—"Simply giving old ideas of others" (W).

Familiar to most is the enquirer (perhaps quite honest) who comes to the class or the interview "loaded," often by maulvi or pandit or clever fellow-student, with classic arguments and pious professions and profound questionings, which are not truly a part of the warp and woof of his own experience and belief. As long as, Tomlinson-like, he represents not his own but others' beliefs and ideas, little is gained from seeking to convince with the truth his mind which has not learned, or is not willing, to think for itself. With such a man a foundation of personal convictions must first be laid, by emphasizing the individual nature of responsibility and the importance of truly "being a person." "Ask, 'What do *you* think about it?' on a practical question of conduct and, easily following, 'Why didn't you act that way yesterday, or last week.' The obviousness of the difference between

what a man says his beliefs are, and what they obviously are, must be brought home to him—not by reading" (H¹). As the mind of such a student is usually (perhaps unconsciously) closed to the truth, the suggestion of B is valuable in this connection:—"I believe that an open mind can sometimes be secured by asking an enquirer seriously to consider whether he would be willing to believe in Jesus Christ and the Bible if they appealed to him as true. If not, he can possibly be brought to see the fallacy of pre-judging the question."

2. *Superficiality*—appearing to have made much greater progress than is actually the case. E warns us against this characteristic. "Do not be misled by their use of Christian language into thinking that it is necessarily a sign of approaching conversion. Words and phrases mean but little to them." And S³ gives a graphic account of one enquirer, whose case well illustrates this peculiarity, as well as the need, sometimes, of reference to other religions, which will be later discussed. "I remember one case, a Calcutta graduate, a fine spiritually-minded young man, with whom I had been reading for some months, carefully avoiding any Hindu discussions. I rejoiced in his spiritual receptivity, his evident devotion to Christ, his earnest prayers. The puja came, and I asked him what his family would say, now that he could no longer join them in their idol worship. 'Why could he not join them?' he asked. Then I found that the old Hindu thoughts and feelings, deeply rooted in his mind and family life, were kept untouched by the new ideas, as it were in a water-tight compartment; and the two were kept together in the same consciousness by the favourite argument of Hindu toleration—that all religions are but different expressions of the same truth. We must

make sure that the light shines into the dark places, else it cannot drive the darkness out ”

3. *Insincerity*—in pretending to be troubled by difficulties which have been sedulously hunted out in advance in order to trap the teacher. Every personal worker in India knows and has been tried by this species of “enquirer.” Only experience and prayer will enable one to distinguish between the genuinely troubled soul and the pretender. H³ advises the teacher to assume that such tactics will not be resorted to, rather than to expect and prepare to meet them. “ I have not preconceived difficulties beforehand which might be raised by a representative of a certain crew; as I have assumed it to be a matter of outward form rather than of belief. This assumption has always worked. One early comes to a defining of ‘belief,’ one’s own, as against one’s community’s.”

When men of this insincere type are encountered, however, and must be answered, T offers the following counsel:—“ Be careful of men whose purpose is to trap you or *always confess ignorance* (where it exists) either of your own beliefs or theirs, and especially of Sanskrit or Arabic. A man will frequently get out of a dilemma by saying, ‘ Oh, well, you do not understand Sanskrit (or Arabic), so you cannot possibly understand our point of view.’ ‘ I cannot explain this in English or even in Urdu. You must know Sanskrit.’ Tell him that only a religion which can be translated into, and understood in, many languages, can save mankind. A god who can only speak in a dead language must be a dead god. Christ is alive to-day and speaks to each one in his own living language !

“ They frequently ask many quibbling questions, by picking out individual verses, and try to trap us as they

tried to trap Him. Always compare with the context and with other verses on the same subject. For example, Christ says, 'Peace I leave with you,' He is called 'the Prince of Peace.' Yet, He says, 'I came not to send peace but a sword.' A little study shows that Christ came to send spiritual peace, peace of mind, but this is only to be had at the price of sacrifice and eternal strife between good and evil. For the Hindu or Muhammadan the sword is in his own home. It is the sword of persecution if he follows Christ. Again, Christ says, 'I came not to judge the world,' and yet He says that the world is judged by Him. Christ does not judge, but the very knowledge of Him judges the man. Indeed, each man's own knowledge judges him. It is the fundamental law of God. A man is only held accountable when he knows. But as soon as he knows, or even knows he can know, and refuses to know, refuses to accept, he judges himself. Christ is always willing to accept, to love, to grant mercy. It is the man, who is not willing to let Christ's love change him."

4. *Hazy, ineffectual thinking*, which never thinks through to definite and practical conclusions. There is a tendency always to argue indefinitely and in a circle, against which the teacher must ever be on his guard. Perhaps the advice given in several papers, *never* to argue, is not too strong. Simple, clear, logical statements of personal conviction of the truth in its more practical issues, are needed here. "As a general rule I believe that not the intellectual argument, but the authoritative assertion, the testimony of personal experiences, makes by far the strongest impression and is the greatest help to the enquirer" (S³). The necessity of being simple

and direct is urged effectively by P¹. "One of the greatest difficulties is how to be sufficiently simple. We over-rate the capacity of the student. He may be, after all, only a sort of schoolboy, and, too often, not a schoolboy who has been trained to think, but only to cram. To put things so simply and yet so interestingly that he cannot help thinking is our great problem. For this purpose we must be as practical as possible, taking our illustrations from local life as much as we possibly can—drawing out the fact that the Gospel touches life and is not only a theory or a philosophy, as they often imagine. The practical side invariably appeals to them. All the better if they see how it touches their own life and its problems, giving them victory over sin, guidance, hope for the future, etc. To make them feel their need is far and away the most effective argument, if not the only effective one. We should aim at their hearts all the time. It is also very important to learn to speak slowly and distinctly. In our enthusiasm there is a great tendency to speak too fast for them, and they will not stop us!"

5. *Indolence*, interfering with serious, consecutive study. S¹ writes: "The most difficult thing in my experience is to get enquirers to do private reading," and he adds this practical hint: "I have tried to get them to collect material, e.g., the evidence for the Resurrection."

6. *Lack of moral standards* to which to appeal. W gives this as his most baffling difficulty, and states the only way to meet it, namely, by "showing the ethics and the moral virtues of Christ as compared with all others." In this connection we must press for a conviction of sin—the personal rather than the intellectual note. "Get

him to speak frankly about his own religious and moral life, rather than about his beliefs" (F).

This difficulty verges on the theological difficulties which will be considered in another chapter.

S³ sums up most of the above-mentioned difficulties, inherent in the mind and will of the enquirer, together with the method of resolving them, in a single paragraph, as follows:—"The lack of steadiness and endurance in the inquiry, the lack of courage to follow their convictions, the inevitable shrinking from a personal decision and the easiness with which they for years can live in two different atmospheres—these are but some of the difficulties with which we have to contend. Jesus' life and character give us ample opportunity to arouse and strengthen the moral consciousness, which is the indispensable condition of a real conversion and faith in Christ. The close personal contact and confidence of friendship, which alone opens the doors of the inner life and makes the personal relationship possible, is the most important part of all dealing with enquirers."

CHAPTER IV.

Study of the Bible

WHILE certain generalisations can be profitably made regarding Bible study with enquirers, the personal equation of the teacher must always be kept in view, for, as M reminds us, "we can teach that part of the Bible most efficiently which mirrors our own religious experience."

Another preliminary factor to be borne in mind is the uncertainty of the period of the teacher's opportunity, since the continuance of the study is, in the nature of the case, dependent on the will of the student. "From personal failure I would strongly warn against making too slow progress: we never know how long we have our man" (T).

Since this is so, there can be no question that the teaching should first of all concern itself with the life of Christ, the central fact of Christianity, the primary inspiration to right living, and the necessary background of all future study of Christian truth. F writes: "It is the teaching of Christ that tells most seriously on the minds of young Hindus," and he adds: "the present social ferment and widespread desire to do social service make Christ's miracles and His social service of great importance also." An outline study of Christ's life and teaching is, therefore, emphasized by all as the first requirement in reading with the newly-won enquirer, unless this ground has been very thoroughly traversed at a previous time. There is, moreover, food for thought in the observation of H³: "Among all the hundreds of

Hindu students who have passed through my hands, I have found none who had even a fair knowledge of Christianity, and so I make no distinction with respect to classes." C writes:—" It is always safe to begin with Christ as a man, ' tempted in all points like as we are,' then as a Teacher, and then as a divine being. . . . I try to prove the divinity of Christ by His own claims."

It is essential that the teaching should be systematic and continuous, rather than scrappy and sporadic. " It will be understood that we aim at a continuous course of reading. It is not once or twice we meet, but regularly two or three times a week, if possible for two or three months together. Hence the choice of a book to work through" (P¹).

" The principal and primary part of the Bible, in reading with enquirers, must always be the Gospels, as the living presentation of the Saviour as He came and comes to men. As counteraction to their own usual desultory reading, I prefer at least to begin with the continuous reading of a whole gospel, in all cases systematic reading following a definite plan. The cruder the enquirer is the briefer and less detailed it is well to make the course. For the ordinary raw youth in the entrance class or first college year, anxious to learn English and curious to learn about Christianity, I often prefer St. Mark as giving the historical setting, the principal facts of Jesus' life and the essentials of His character. Where I find real religious interest and spiritual response, I prefer one of the other synoptics, by personal preference usually St. Matthew, because it takes us quicker *in medias res*, gives the most striking presentation of the Sermon on the Mount, and, though written for Jews generally, appeals more to the Indian mind than St.

Luke's more historical method" (S³). St. Mark is on the whole favoured for the preliminary study of Christ's life, to be followed by the Sermon on the Mount, though H² would take "a selection from all three synoptics, making a continuous life of Christ. St. Mark begins at the right place, but has not the Sermon on the Mount." He generally begins with St. Matthew, "1, because of Farquhar's commentary and the altogether excellent introduction on the Old Testament, most valuable as a starting point; 2, because it contains the Sermon on the Mount, which appears to have attracted more Hindus to Christ than any other part of the Bible." And P¹ adds the following reasons for beginning with St. Matthew: "It is the first Gospel. Its subjects are grouped. It emphasizes the need of boldness under persecution (Chapter 10)." Commenting on the parts of the Bible which most influenced him in Muhammadan days, S² writes: "Foremost among these was the Sermon on the Mount, which made most appeal to me in that idealist, imaginative, hopeful, heroic time of youth." The emphasis on action which must go with the teaching of the Sermon is brought out by H. "I feel our first endeavour must be to get an idea of *personal* decision on religious and moral matters, and for that the Sermon on the Mount, taken in conjunction with the saying, 'if ye do the will, ye will know of the doctrine,' is by far the best means, in my opinion. Almost anyone will agree that the teaching is good. It is the *doing* of it, as the condition of insight, that we have to emphasize."

The suggestion of a brief introductory study of the Old Testament, giving the transition to the New Dispensation, is proffered in several papers as being

valuable for elementary students especially. S¹ has found the Old Testament stories useful as a beginning with younger students, from 14 to 16 years of age, without regard to their previous knowledge of Christianity. E writes: "Begin by explaining how Israel differed from all other peoples in its religious beliefs—1, God's Unity; 2, God's Holiness; 3, God's Imagelessness; 4, The Expectation." W writes:—"Those who know little of Christianity usually have wanted the Old Testament, and with these I have used topical rather than chapter work. Bible ideas of God, Man, Love, Mercy, Suffering, Sin, Salvation, etc., carried from Old Testament to New Testament, give excellent opportunity to show the growth of the idea, and easy analogy with Hinduism is possible, showing transition from Old to New as the national self-consciousness develops." And S³ suggests the following brief historical course, giving the fundamental facts of Israel's history and the preparation for the Gospel:—Genesis, 1-4; 6-8; 12, 15; 22; 28; 32; Exodus 1-3; 20; Leviticus 17; Deuteronomy 6; 18; 30-32; 2 Samuel 7; Psalms 23; 51; 32; 72; Isaiah 6; 11, 12; 40; 42; 49; 52-53.

Following this possible Old Testament preface and introductory study of Christ's life, and of His teachings, especially as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, the Johannine writings are recommended in nearly every paper, special emphasis being placed on John 3 and 14 and 1 John 3 and 4. "It is John's gospel which leads deepest into the personal relation with the living Christ," writes S³, and he adds, "1 John can be used as a supplement to the Gospel, driving the great moral issue home with tremendous force." H¹ suggests, however, the caution that "with Theosophically inclined

Hindus, St. John might give too large an opening for speculation on the Logos—useless at this stage.” The same writer gives a tentative programme of Gospel reading with an average (Punjabi) student enquirer, as follows:—“(1) Matthew 5, following. (The Ethics). (2) John, steadily, but not too intricately. (3) Mark, quickly. (4) John, again, the whole thoroughly.” A, C, H², S¹, S³ and T would follow or accompany John with readings from the book of Acts. The student is thus “introduced to the atmosphere of the early Church in which Christ was worshipped as Ascended, so different from that of the Gospels where His human limitations are so obvious” (P¹). In using Acts S³ has “caught new interest by the living presentation of Christ’s power in His disciples’ lives.” At this stage topical studies are recommended by several. F sometimes substitutes for John a study of Christianity by subjects, such as sin, forgiveness, holiness, the death of Christ, immortality. T uses “the parables, especially those of the Sower, the Prodigal Son and the Talents”; likewise, the “miracles of healing and Christ’s dealing with children.” S³ also uses the parables, “arranged after their contents (parables of life, of treasure, of judgment, of God’s free gift of grace to the sinner, and of final restoration and consummation of justice).” He adds: “Other courses arranged to meet special difficulties have been:—What Jesus says of Himself (very important with Muhammadans); Jesus’ teaching of sin and salvation; of His death and its meaning (needed in many cases to lead beyond the view of the spiritual teacher).”

Passing on to the Pauline Epistles, S³ observes:—“The Epistles are distinctly for Christians: yet in one interesting case a man asked me to explain Romans 8 to him,

and we spent several months reading that chapter, in the light of God's way of salvation as set forth in verses 1-7. It was characteristic that it was chapter 8, 'the life of the spirit,' that had caught his mind. In another case I read Romans with a candidate for baptism, but with less success. Paul is more a stranger to the Indian mind than John." And H¹ writes: "With very few exceptions, indeed, I have confined myself to the Gospels, with enquirers, using the Epistles only very occasionally as illustrative of the working out of principles, e.g., in Paul's mind, *after* similar results have been arrived at by both of us independently." Nevertheless M urges larger use of the Epistles, since "our living experience of life in Christ, or 'Christ in us,' is better expounded in the letters of Paul than anywhere else: and that is what we most want to impart." Similarly S², himself a convert from Islam, has found that the Christian experience of St. Paul strikes a responsive chord, of potential Christianity, in the breast of the spiritual-minded Indian student. He writes:—"As to St. Paul, his teaching has been found to be most helpful to the enquirer of the spiritually-minded type. Experience seems to bear out the fact that a man may have real Christian experience without knowing of the historical Christ. At any rate, it is undeniable that in the case of many people the intellectual appreciation of St. Paul long precedes the realization in experience of the same; and this, though it is not as it should be, serves a providential purpose in the progress and discipline of many people. When St. Paul's Christian experience is thus understood by the spiritual-minded Moslem or Hindu, our great object is to show from St. Paul himself that this experience has its sole basis and its complete realization only in the

Perfect, the Sinless, the Crucified and the Risen Almighty life of Jesus Christ."

An earnest and deeply-spiritual Hindu student in Lahore, a man of real prayer life though not a professed enquirer, and one whose favourite passages in St. Paul's Epistles are heavily under-scored in his New Testament, remarked to a missionary friend recently, that when, after reading and meditating on St. Paul's own words, he heard sermons preached from texts which he loved, they always seemed to him an anti-climax. Perhaps he is not far from the Kingdom!

P² reports using Romans 1-8 with success, and T often follows Acts with Romans 6, 7, 8. F, P¹, and T have found Philippians helpful. T has likewise used Galatians 2: 19-21 and Colossians 1: 18-29, but he advises: "Go back constantly to the Gospel whenever they do not object, if they show any ignorance of it, or any opportunity offers."

With regard to the Old Testament, the enquirer will not be altogether kept away from it long. As J writes of the Gospels: "Around these, questions without number arise; and frequent reference in the case of really intelligent enquirers is necessary to many parts of the Bible." In time, however, more than this casual reference will be needed. As S³ observes significantly, "the Old Testament is to my mind used much too little and to too little purpose in enquirers' work. I have come to appreciate its great value, and use it more and more. With Muhammadans it is the natural connecting link, the best way to lay hold of and deepen what religious life they have, and lead them to a truer knowledge of the holy God and a personal relation to God. With Hindus, whose minds have not come

beyond popular Hinduism with its mythology and its consequences, I have often found it necessary to retrace our steps from the gospel to lay the foundation of pure monotheism, moral responsibility and personal religion, exactly the lessons upon which Jesus builds and which He enforced in the Old Testament. All the same, I have never given an enquirer a copy of the Old Testament for his own use, as they get lost in it or make a wrong use of it. As a rule I have only read selected passages with individuals."

In another connection the same writer observes:—
"In using the Old Testament, I always made it clear to the enquirer that it is the record of the preparatory revelation, and must be understood accordingly, both as to God's revelation and to man's conception of God and His will. I have seldom found any difficulty in doing so with Bible criticism, which I never introduce myself, and, when it is brought up by the enquirer, I explain briefly, so as to make him see the difference between the record and the facts recorded, and the truth to be learnt from them. Their lack of historical sense makes it easy to lead them from the sandbanks into the deeper waters."

This contributor has used the Psalms most of all, especially in devotional exercises, "taking a Psalm as an introduction to prayer. It takes you into all the fundamentals of the religious life in its moral and spiritual bearings, apart from any theological explanations; it teaches the man to pray and to live his life in the presence of God, and appeals almost invariably to the Indian mind by its true Oriental feeling and form. One enquirer, a mature man, was so taken with the Psalms that I could hardly get him from them to the Gospels."

F and T also recommend the use of selected Psalms. T has used Proverbs and Ecclesiastes occasionally, and S³ tells of having read with one man who never could get tired of the Proverbs, and never came beyond them. F makes use of selections from Isaiah and Jeremiah, and T recommends Isaiah 53 ; 55 ; and 61 ; and for Hindus especially, Isaiah 44 ; and, for Muhammadans especially, Isaiah 58. He remarks that Deuteronomy 28 "reveals the condition of India, verse for verse." S² comments as follows on the general use of the Old Testament: "In dealing with the Muhammadan enquirer I would certainly use the Old Testament a good deal—the historic portions of the Old Testament for purposes of comparison with the Koran; its moral teaching for purposes of evolution; the prophetical, for purposes of evidence; and the Psalms should be suggested as a most excellent aid to the prayer life."

Special topical studies in the Old Testament are recommended by S³ as follows:—"To present the development of the conception of God, I have used a course in Visions of God: Jacob (Gen. 28; 32); Moses (Exod. 3; 33: 17-34: 8); Isaiah (6; 40: 1-11); Ezek. (1); Daniel (2 and 7); John the Baptist (Matt. 3); John (Rev. 4-6). This gives a fine opportunity of bringing out the principal elements of God's character in His revelation. A study in the Messianic prophecies, carefully selected, is a good help to the problem of Christ's divinity, specially helpful to Muhammadans, taking away the offence of the incarnation. Another interesting but more difficult study for the same purpose may show how the divine attributes are used both of the Creator and the Saviour."

Regarding the vexed question of the inspiration of the Bible, the same writer has this to say. "The question

of the inspiration of the Bible need not be raised with enquirers, and should least of all be emphasized as a basis of studying the book. It will at once be opposed by their magical theories of the inspiration of the Vedas and the Koran, and the inherent demand for unconditional submission only arouses their unwilling criticism. The Bible defends itself, read as the human record of God's revelation and man's religion. It very soon silences any tendency to criticism, and calls forth that reverence and glad submission which they should see in us, and be led to of themselves. This is, after all, the true *testimonium spiritus sancti.*"

Outside of the Bible no definite systematic teaching is suggested, save that J remarks: "I have always taken the Apostles' Creed and gone through it, clause by clause, with more or less full explanations, according to the intellectual state of the learner."

CHAPTER V.

Reference to Other Religions

FROM a study of the responses to the question relating to the comparison of Christianity with other religions, in work with enquirers, several clearly-defined principles emerge.

1. *Do not criticise other religions unless or until thoroughly qualified to do so.* A asserts categorically, "I do not advise comparison with other religions, when beginners undertake the work of instruction. At least five years in the country and earnest study are needed for that." H² is even more explicit. "All direct comparisons should be avoided. They are almost always looked on as prejudiced. Controversy puts both teacher and pupil into the wrong mood. We are not attackers but helpers. One's knowledge of Hinduism should be kept out of sight. All the above applies to one's first ten years or more in India." P¹ does not define a time limit, but observes:—"Students will not regard a foreigner as an authority on their religion, unless specially famous and distinguished. And, moreover, to attack their religion incidentally gives rise to an intellectual battle in which there is no profit, even if you win." And S³ suggests the danger to the temper of the teacher, especially if inexperienced, observing: "I remember a case where I lost a good enquirer, because I was not on my guard and was carried away by moral indignation at his bare-faced persistence in defending anything that was said about the national hero."

As a corollary to the above, it goes without saying that the missionary who hopes to work successfully with enquirers must lose no time in putting himself *en rapport* with the great religious systems of India, in order that, if and when required to speak, it may be with authority. H² states this point forcefully as regards Hinduism: "It is all-important to have as thorough a knowledge of Hinduism as possible: first in order to know the lines of least resistance, what the Hindu is seeking, where you can meet his religious sense; second, in order to know where to train your guns, the weak spot." Others write: "In dealing with the controversialist type of Hindu enquirer, as well as with a controversial Muhammadan, a knowledge of his religion is essential" (S²); "our main argument is to bring Christ to them and them to Christ, but this cannot be done without contact with their own religious world and life. Without that we build on sand" (S³).

2. *Do not criticise other religions in the presence of enquirers whom you do not thoroughly know and understand.* This is necessary in part because any reference to other religions must "depend entirely upon the type of man who is enquiring." For this reason P² has "never formally taken up the study of comparative religions with non-Christians, unless they have taken a course in Bible study." S¹ deprecates all comparison, since, "Unless you can find a very clear point of contact it is better to stick to positive Christian teaching." S³ goes into further detail on this point. "With individuals the newcomer will do best to leave these questions alone, until he has come to know the practical religion and the men. In cases where the enquirer actually has lost faith in his own religion, it is of no use for us to

elucidate it and perhaps confuse his mind, where he is bound to it only by national or family relations. He may consider any critical reference or comparison a slight, which makes him suspicious if not hostile. This is true both of Hindus and Muhammadans, especially the latter, with whom all disputes as far as possible should be avoided. The same is still more true where the old religion has, or has had, personal value in the student's own life."

This is necessary, in the second place, because it is only when the teacher has wholly won the love and respect of his pupil that he is able to say frankly, as well as tactfully, what is in his heart when reference to other religions is required. As H² writes: "When they feel you really care for them you can say what you like, yet always with the most exquisite gentleness and reverence for their feelings: in love and humility."

A corollary under this head would be: *Never criticize other religions in class work*, where the same intimate personal relationship of teacher and pupil is never possible as that which may obtain in work with individuals. Thus S³ advises: "In classes it is always well to avoid discussions, as there will always be some who argue for argument's sake, and most men will consider it their duty to stand up for their own." In public lectures courteous comparison by a competent authority may sometimes have a place. F, who can speak as such an authority, sums up as follows. "My own practice is to avoid the discussion of Hinduism almost altogether in public addresses, in Bible classes, and in private conversations; but there are times when it is necessary to speak out. Men ask questions. In that case it is better to speak privately

than publicly, though now and then a comparative address, dealing with some point common to the two religions, may be of value." And S³ writes: "As a rule general comparisons between religions and treatment of definite Hindu doctrines should be left to public lectures, without discussion, while in private conversation all that has to do with the personal religious life has its proper place."

3. *When the student whom you have come to know, makes comparison with his own religion unavoidable or desirable, be fair and courteous and honest in reply.* Nearly all contributors to this Symposium admit that there may come a time when to keep silent would be to be misunderstood or to lose an inspired opportunity. But this opportunity must not be forced and must be carefully guarded. E writes succinctly: "Avoid all reference to other religions, unless specially asked, and then do not argue." In similar vein H³ adds: "Not arguments at all, but prayer with them and for them"; and P¹, "As far as possible avoid controversy, and aim for the heart." Others give the mode of procedure, if some comparison finally becomes necessary. "That is the enquirer's business, and he will do it well, if any kernel of the truth gets into him. References will of course arise on his part—one ought to be ready with understanding of them; and, while not dogmatic, be careful to let no slipshod analogies pass. No comparisons, in general. If a man gets the truth, he will apologise to himself. There are many means to drive home the truth. The Word of God is the sharpest and straightest" (H¹). "I would not compare Christianity with other religions at first, but questions, and pressing the man toward a statement of faith, inevitably lead to

it. If the enquirer asks my opinion of other religions, I try to give it frankly and boldly, but not in such a way as to offend things they reverence, unless it is absolutely necessary. I admit a great deal of truth in all other religions. We come to build on this, not to destroy it, but sometimes a great deal of clearing away of error is necessary before building operations can begin. But this can often be done without the knowledge of the seeker, by working out from points of agreement" (S³). This emphasis on the points of agreement, and appreciation of truth from every source, is further urged by S³. "The aim should never be only to prove the inadequacy of the other religion. I always point out that the subjective elements of the religious life—as faith, devotion, self-denial—are found as well among Hindus and Muhammadans as among Christians (and sometimes much better), and I am never slow to admit the religious truths underlying many of their myths and ceremonies. But by letting the clear light of the religious ideal into the comparison, it may be possible to make them see for themselves the essential difference between the perfect and the imperfect, and then to leave the choice to their own conscience. We can afford to be generous because we know the power of the light. After all, no other religion knows of a living Saviour and a present salvation. When you know your ground well, it is even possible in this way to get a good result out of a comparison between Christ and Krishna. I have tentatively admitted his historical existence, allowed the allegorical interpretation of the Puranic stories, accepted the Gita as his teaching (unknown for 700 years after its deliverance!), and yet I have got men to see that we do not know a single fact of what this man has done

for others, that his teaching is simply intellectualistic philosophy and knows of no salvation for sinners, that the same teaching has left India unchanged for centuries, and that the same Krishna, as only an avatar, exists no more and nowhere and can help no one. The contrast to Christ is obvious." Again, the same writer says: "I remember more than one who was driven away by harsh criticisms from Western logical and moral arguments." And, in like manner, J:—"I do not see how reference to other religions can be avoided, but I have always myself tried to make these references in as courteous and appreciative a manner as possible. I think we should be ready to recognise and admit whatever truth and beauty can be seen anywhere in them. I have always discouraged in our workers an attitude of 'hard-lipped antagonism.' There has been too much of this." What this "courteous manner" is, ideally, is suggested by S¹. "Enquirers, especially Hindus, usually insist on asking questions, which demand criticism if they are to be answered. I usually reply by a counter question, 'What do you feel yourself?' 'Are you satisfied with the Hindu doctrine?' etc." And similarly, S³ suggests: "The best way is, I think, to elicit questions from the enquirer himself, or to use the opportunities in the book to point out apparent or real similarities with other religions, in order to make a connection with the old ideas."

Along with charity and courtesy must go steadfastness and loyalty to Christ, else the student may infer a doubt in the teacher's heart, if not even a confession of the inferiority of Christian truth. C puts this side of the case strongly. "I never abate the claims of Christ, even though I recognize the good that there is in non-

Christian religions. I do not ever try to conciliate their minds by saying that there is not much difference between Christianity and their religions, that their religions are good but Christianity is better. Not this, but a bold categorical statement that without Christ there is no salvation."

When experience and knowledge are ripe and the inspired moment of opportunity is recognized, then, and then only, is the time to speak. As H² points out, "when (1) your students know you speak out of knowledge, with authority, and (2) they are sure of your love for them, and your honesty and humility, then the experienced man can make a frontal attack with tremendous effect. But you must not take this position for yourself; you must wait till your students have given it to you. They must judge, not you. It is the evident love and tenderness that alone will carry you through." In this connection we might quote again S²'s method of procedure with a Muhammadan enquirer who desires and is prepared for a comparative study. "In dealing with an enquirer of the more rational 'Controversialist' type, it is helpful to make a comparative study of the Bible and the Koran, and to show him the scantiness, the scrappy nature, the unhistorical and unchronological treatment of the Scripture narratives by the Koran, as well as to show how largely the Koran is indebted to the Christian Scriptures for all its history and for most of what is best in it." And with regard to Hindu enquirers, M writes:—"I believe one of the most fruitful approaches is to get the enquirer to think and express in words all that his ancestral religion is doing for him and his people. We can with equal frankness say what Christ does for us and ours."

Perhaps the best brief summary of what should be the general attitude of the missionary upon this question of comparative religions is given by M. "There should never be the slightest reluctance or hesitation in relation to any question of another religion, and we should be sympathetic up to the limit of truth and loyalty to Christ."

The next chapter will afford some further instances of right and necessary recourse to comparison or criticism.*

* Mr. K. T. Paul would add, to the above, this final word of caution: "It is obvious that in this whole matter of comparison and contrast everything depends on the personal equation of the teacher—his preparation, his spirituality, and his sympathy."

CHAPTER VI.

Difficulties—Theological

THEOLOGICAL difficulties are not to be sought, and the form which they will take cannot be anticipated. When they come they must be met primarily out of the teacher's own experience and interpretation of truth. M. writes wisely :—

“ As a matter of fact, in my opinion, our attitude should be to let theological questions primarily alone, and endeavour most of all to convey and impart the spiritual life that is at the centre of Christianity. When theological questions come up, as come up they must, each of us should face them out of the fund of our own experience and thinking as authoritative for us, but always suggest that the vital experience of Christ is the supreme thing in our religion, of which the theological expression is never adequate. This leaves room for a man to grasp at the reality, and form his own opinion about it in the light of his experience. The theologising of others can at best only be suggestions to a man's true thoughts of religion.”

Moreover, we need to bear in mind the words of the Master to His disciples of all generations : “ Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye : for it is not ye that speak but the Holy Ghost.” There must always be, on the part of the teacher, such a heavenward-looking attitude as will provide an opening for the Holy Spirit to fulfil the

Master's promise of a prompting from above, in every hour of need. And unless we are prepared to be boldly truthful, we can be sure that we shall not receive the Spirit's assistance. H² well says:—"Never give a half-true answer. Better be beaten. When faced by a new and serious difficulty I have always found that the determination to be scrupulously honest, as you discuss the point aloud, traversing ground new and unknown to yourself, feeling your way—*if accompanied by conscious dependence upon God's help and direction, and the upward look of prayer*—results in your being led *somewhere*—into a sufficient answer for the time and man anyhow."

In addition to personal experience of the truth and the divine element of inspiration from above, the teacher must depend upon the training received in Christian theology and in comparative religions. In comparing the relative advantages of experience and training, P¹ writes: "There are, no doubt, books to answer these questions, but experience is the best guide of all for each particular case."

Only the most common and persistent difficulties can be mentioned here, and a few (out of many) lines of thought suggested, by following which these difficulties have been met in the past.

1. *The Trinity.* Perhaps the most common, as well as the crudest, form in which the student voices his perplexity regarding this great mystery, is that which we have heard so often, "Why do the Christians worship three Gods?" This is pre-eminently a difficulty of Muhammadans, who have been trained in a school which forcibly and finely emphasizes the Unity of God, and is never forgetful of the Koranic scorn of the Trinity,

which Muhammad so wholly failed to comprehend. The Hindus are ready enough to grant the possibility of a Christian Trinity, assuming it to be parallel to the Trimurti of which they have been taught in Hindu theology. Perhaps the first essential thought which must be lodged in the mind of the Muhammadan student, with his precise formulas to cover and obscure every difficult problem, is that of the impossibility of the finite fully comprehending the infinite. If the student has read Muhammadan theology, a starting-point might be made with the Moslem doctrine of "Difference"—which prescribes that Allah cannot be spoken of in terms of other beings—which are originated. Indeed, some Moslems went so far with this idea (which gave rise to the well-known formula, "Without enquiring how and without comparison") that they came finally to the conclusion (approaching the agnosticism of Hume from a different angle), that the finite mind can never conceive of the infinite God, can know nothing whatever about Him; and, for them, therefore, if consistent, a certain knowledge of God could only come through revelation or (as it has come to the Sufis) through the mystic's "Inner Light." The doctrine of the Trinity is only an attempt to state a truth whose magnitude transcends our processes of thought.*

* See *The Aspects of Islam*, by D. B. Macdonald (Macmillan & Co.), pp. 131-136, where Allah's characteristics of "Difference" and "Unity" are treated. Regarding the latter, Professor Macdonald writes: "But so far as I have gone, I do not find a really satisfactory proof in Muslim theology that the essence of Allah must be an internal unity. I do not see, that is to say, that they have logically disproven the possibility in Allah of the Christian Trinity, even if we regard that as meaning a difference in essence."

As primary answer, then, to the objection that the idea of the Trinity contradicts reason and experience, C reasons as follows :—“ If students themselves bring up the doctrine of the Trinity, I tell them that it pertains to the Nature of God and is therefore bound to be enveloped in mystery. In nature and in our own physical system there are mysteries which we cannot understand, but we do not, for that reason, reject the human system or condemn nature as not worthy of our appreciation, etc. Surely God, the Creator of the entire universe, cannot be simpler than His Creation. If I could understand everything in Him, He would be simpler and more ordinary than myself, and I do not wish to worship such a God. Many things pertaining to the nature of God are inscrutable, for ‘we know in part’ only.”

We cannot, of course, stop here ; and how we proceed will depend on the enquirer confronting us. In most cases it will probably be wise, by an exposition of selected passages in St. John’s Gospel, the Acts and the Epistles, to show how the doctrine of the Trinity came into existence, historically, as Jews, with the Semitic bent toward a belief in the Unity of God, were compelled to account for the God revealed in Nature, in Christ, and in their own souls—distinct and yet one. Students of psychology may be helped by a study of Personality, in the light of modern psychology, developing the idea of multiplicity in unity.

For others, the familiar metaphysical arguments for the Trinity (to be found in any handbook of Christian doctrine) may be helpful. T argues the question of the Trinity, and of the Incarnation which is related to it, first from the point of view of possibility and then of

pragmatism. "How could an infinite God become finite? You admit God is infinite. Infinity is that number every part of which is equal to the whole. It is not mathematically impossible to have one Infinite God in many places. Why, too, should you assume anything impossible for God? Why should an infinite God become finite? A (merely) transcendent God is useless to us in actual life. Men could not know God, His love and care for us, nor know His meaning for man's life in the world, without seeing Him in man. It is better to have no God than a God who does not care for you. If He cares, if He can feel for your (finite) joys and sorrows, must He not be able to reveal this, to come in a (finite) form which should make men know His love and His suffering for us? "*

2. *Christ, the only Incarnation.* This is more peculiarly a Hindu difficulty. "Most Hindus accept readily all that troubles the Muhammadans. They have their own Trinity, their own incarnations. Most of them admit that Christ is an incarnation of God, but choose to follow a different incarnation. Why should there be only one incarnation? Why is Christ better than Ram or Krishna?" (T). H³, mentioning this as the chief difficulty in reading with Hindus, suggests, as the best means of dealing with it, a study of St. John's Gospel. This should bring out the incomparable beauty of the character of Christ, and the unique significance which He attaches to Himself as the sole revelation of the Father and Saviour of mankind. There can be no higher authority for the unique validity of the Christian

* This subject of the Trinity, as related to Muslims, is exhaustively treated in *Crusaders of the Twentieth Century*, by W. A. Rice, M.A. (C.M.S.), Chapter II.

revelation than the word of Christ, authenticated by His character. And if this is the Truth, there can be no other. In order that he may apprehend the truth, the student must be urged to adopt the genuine truth-seeker's open-minded attitude as he studies the revelation mediated through the incarnation of Christ. As F writes, regarding "the contention that the great religions are equally valuable," "in dealing with this difficulty, the line I should take is to try to make the man feel the need of reaching explicit truth in religion ; but here, as in the case of other difficulties, it is often better to try to meet them indirectly, by the slow process of the infiltration of Christian teaching."

If, however, a direct comparison is called for, in order to prove, historically, the unique character of the Christian incarnation, the superiority of Christ to Krishna and of the Gospel to the Gita, "the historic argument can be used effectively with a few of the better men" (F). T illustrates his method under these circumstances.

~ "Q. Why is Christ better than Ram or Krishna ?

"A. Ram and Krishna were great heroes like those of the Iliad. Ram was a good man, but no guide for a practical life to-day. His reign was authoritative, and based on caste, which most of you are now denying. The Krishna of the Gita is a myth. See Farquhar's *Permanent Message of the Gita and Crown of Hinduism*. Even if he taught these things, there is nothing practical in his life which can be a good example to men to-day. See the killing of Sisupala, the death of Bhishma, by a treachery condemned by his favourite disciple, in the *Maha-*

Note.—*The Christian Idea of the Incarnation*, by Principal Rudra (C. L. S., 1 anna), is an interesting study of this subject by an Indian Christian leader.

bharata. We cannot follow his example with the goat-herdesses, for whatever purpose he acted. If he could not follow his own teaching, is there any power in this teaching? The Gita is probably an early attempt to reconcile Hindu teachings with early Christian teachings in India. It is never mentioned until 500 A.D. by Tulsi Das. The system of Vedanta is beautiful, but is not real for life in this world. The Gita contradicts itself on the matters of forgiveness and of action; it stops all progress by giving up good as well as bad, and by not permitting any thought of reward or result in action. (And yet it promises bliss, a reward.) Christ would have us use every talent, develop every muscle, feeling and desire for His service, in order to crush bad desires while developing good desires, and to be saved from sin and death as the reward. No one in practice, in actual life, can hate both good and evil. He will love one. (Parable of the Talents.) Only Christ both preached and practised. Only He gave a practical way of life, which rich and poor, educated and ignorant, can follow.

“Q. Why should there be only one incarnation? What of the people before Christ?

“A. Only one for the very reason that if there were two diverse incarnations the revelation of God would not be certain. Those before Christ and those not knowing Him have had a partial revelation in prophets and in the truth of other religions. As Paul says, (Romans 1) if a man lived up to the best light he had, he would be saved; but the very law was a temptation, and only Christ gives *power* to live up to what is known, and frees from a rigorous, literal law, enabling the act to be perfectly fitted to the occasion, according to great general principles (Romans 6, 7, 8).

“Q. What did Christ teach which was not taught before in Hindu books ?

“A. The golden rule, and the practice of it. He was the first to put the child, the woman, the sick, the poor, the ignorant and the sinner in their rightful and necessary place ; the first to *practise* the brotherhood of man. (See Nietzsche). He added positive morality to negative morality. He practised sacrifice of one’s acknowledged rights for the lifting of those who had lesser opportunity, who could not compete on equal terms.”

As a postscript under this head might be noticed the question of Muhammadan students, whether Muhammad is not the true prophet, or at least on an equality with Christ. The following answer is suggested :—“ If this question is asked, it is necessary with great sorrow to suggest the defects of Muhammad and his teaching, and especially to ask whether Muhammad has satisfied. Has Muhammad helped you personally ? Muhammad is dead. He has helped many, but he never cured, or suffered for, anyone, so far as I have read the Koran. And even if he did then, still he cannot help you in this life now ” (T). The contrasting power of the living Christ must then be depicted.*

* Mr. K. T. Paul makes the following note on the above paragraphs dealing with the Trinity and the Incarnation :—“ To the Hindu enquirer the difficulty is not in acknowledging that the doctrine of the Trinity could only be an indefinite result of an attempt to express in human language what is really infinite and incomprehensible. His difficulty is in accepting a statement which is so admittedly inadequate as a doctrine *essential* to his Faith. The doctrine of the Incarnation is equally a mystery : but the Hindu is attracted by it and accepts it, when he has seen Jesus first. The doctrine of the Trinity is a second and a much larger order on his reasoning faculty : and it has no human interest to commend it. It is in the realm of pure intellect ; and the

3. *The Person of Christ.*

(a) *The Historic Fact.* In case this is found to be a difficulty with enquirers, P¹ recommends the use of Farquhar's *The Historic Christ, An Open Letter to the Thinking Men of Calcutta, 1901*, in which the evidence is summed up.

(b) *His Miracles.* The evidence of the New Testament itself must be very influential with thinking men, who may be shown how naturally and with what verisimilitude the miracles are introduced by the Gospel writers, and how they are interwoven with Jesus' teaching in so many instances. The Muhammadan cannot allege corruption of the Bible here, since the Koran attests that God gave miracles to Jesus. With enquirers more philosophically inclined, P¹ would use the familiar argument that miracles do not represent contravention of law, but are rather acts which come within the scope of higher laws as yet undiscovered by those to whom they appear to be miracles.

The question of the miracles of Jesus, however, is allied to the larger question of His divinity, for if He be divine we should naturally expect from Him miracles in the sense just defined.

(c) *His Divinity.* The argument for the divinity of Jesus will follow that first suggested in order to prove Him the only incarnation. Several papers mention P. Carnegie Simpson's *The Fact of Christ* in this

argument of the Infinite is no argument for this dogma, any more than for any other mystic dogma relating to the conception of the Absolute in any other religion : for example, that of Advaitism. In my limited experience, whenever the question was raised by an enquirer, I have told him that an intellectual assent to the doctrine of the Trinity is not an essential to the Faith of a Christian."

connection, since the argument for letting Christ prove to the earnest seeker His own divinity, by means of the powerful impression created by His personality in the Scriptures, has perhaps never been more lucidly and forcibly stated. C's method approximates this. "If I can convince my students that Christ was a spotless man, and an inspired or Divine Teacher, they are quick to see that if the same Man laid claim to be divine He was either an impostor or exactly what He claimed to be. If the former, He cannot be a good man, and surely an impostor's religion cannot transform the world and be accepted by the leading philosophers, literary men, discoverers and inventors, etc. The most convincing proof is the transformed lives of His true seekers. Thus I try to prove the Divinity of Christ by His own claims. True Muhammadans, for certain, will never admit that Christ was an impostor or a sinful man."

T details a series of special readings which may be used to give Christ's own conception of His unique relation to God and Man. "The claims of His unique divinity and saviourship must be fought through with every earnest enquirer. I have always found His own utterances most convincing, specially in St. John (*Vide* 1: 1-18; 3: 1-21; 5: 17-30; 6: 35-51; 10: 1-30; 14-15; 20)." And he adds, "But stronger than this and even than His sinless life and perfect character I believe to be the personal experience of His living reality in our own lives. The more the enquirer is impressed with the oneness of the historical Jesus and the living Christ, whom we love and worship, the easier he will grasp and submit to the divinity of the historical Jesus."

(d) *His Atoning Death.* There can be but one approach to this doctrine with the enquirer. He must first be

brought to feel the terrible nature and consequences of human sin: "I come to the atonement, after teaching my students something about sin and the helplessness of the entire human race to overcome and be free from its power" (C).

The Cross will be a stumbling-block and offence so long as the enquirer has never felt his sin as a dark shadow, which has come between his heart and the holy love of God. With the Muhammadan (especially of the Shi'ah sect) the idea of the mediatorship of Jesus presents a way of approach, since his mind is already familiar with the idea of a mediating intercession. P² uses the Epistle to the Hebrews to reinforce the idea of the mediator. The Biblical approach, through the Old Testament conception of sacrifice, culminating in the sacrificial death of Christ, is used by S³. "The old mediæval conception of the atonement as vicarious substitution by an outsider is a real offence to the Indian mind, saturated with the idea of Karma; and being both unbiblical and immoral it should be carefully avoided. A preparatory study in the sacrificial idea of the Old Testament, leading up to the self-sacrifice of the servant of the Lord in Isaiah 40-53, as introduction to a careful study of the death of Jesus and His own view of its meaning, is, I believe, the simplest way to bring out the fundamental facts, man's inability to save himself, God's love as the source of salvation, Jesus' death as the consequence both of man's sin and of God's love, and His victory over sin and death being justified as our way of salvation, because of His oneness with us through love and our oneness with Him through faith. From the beginning of Jesus' life in His incarnation and baptism, I always lay stress on His biological and

sociological unity with all men as the basis of His atoning death. Paul's argument in Romans 5: 12-21 lies much nearer to Indian thought (though I seldom refer to it because of its difficult construction) than the more strictly Jewish conception in Romans 3: 23-25. The main difficulty on this point lies, however, in the Indian lack of a moral conception of salvation, and has to be met on this ground."

4. *The Moral Character of God and of Religion.* This difficulty is of course involved in any adequate presentation of the atonement. Before very long the missionary, in contact with both Hindus and Muhammadans, in India, comes to realize that "the conception of God, not only as a unity but as a moral personality, and of religion as a moral relation of a responsible human personality to the absolute creator and judge, is to most Indians the greatest difficulty. It must always be kept in mind and, directly and indirectly, fought against" (S³).

The fundamental concept which must be implanted in the mind and heart of the Indian is that of the essential Fatherhood of God, as uniquely taught by, and exemplified in, Jesus; and out of this will flow a new understanding of the two great commandments of the Gospel in which inheres man's two-fold ethical relationship: "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The Hindu student must be made to realize that Religion is a life, not a philosophy, that it is not true that "knowledge needs no touchstone of reality, that the mind alone can decide which is the best religion, apart from practical experience." H¹, who thus states the problem, adds that help may be given "possibly, in some cases, by reading (e.g.,

Plato), but chiefly by blunt emphasis:—‘Meanwhile, you've got to live, you need salvation *now!*’” Because of this false idea of Religion as divorced from conduct, which makes it such a stumbling-block for the Hindu, H suggests further: “Religion should be defined—a much misused word in India—and afterwards avoided. We are out for the making of better citizens.”

5. *The Problem of Evil and Suffering.* To quote again from the paper of T:—“Q. God created evil as well as good. 1. Is not evil as God-like as good? 2. Is not ignorance the only sin? 3. Is not the difference between good and evil only a difference of degree, like that between heat and cold?

A. 1. God did not create evil, but to create a man like Himself, with free-will, He had to allow choice, and man sometimes chose wrong. Without free-will man would have been as a beast, without the possibility of development of character. God might have made man a perfect machine, like the bee or ant, but such perfection is static, finite, and can never grow or approach God. Man is made ignorant and helpless, because only so can his growth and progress be infinite. Perfection for man is an infinite growth.

“2. Ignorance is not a sin. The most educated and clever man may be the worst sinner. He has greater possibilities of good, but also greater possibilities of evil (‘The Wheat and Tares’). His responsibility is greater in proportion to his knowledge (John 15). *His sin is greater.* Jesus did not limit righteousness to the higher classes. He first comforted the poor and ignorant, by showing that their righteousness may exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees.

“3. The difference of degree is between different degrees of falsity as $3=2$, $3=2\frac{1}{2}$, $3=2\frac{3}{4}$, $3=2\frac{99}{100}$, but the only true statement is $3=3$, and it differs in kind from all the others. So does good from evil. However, there is an evolution in perfection. What is the highest for one state of mankind is evil for another. When one sin is conquered another appears. For example, railway rebates were not considered wrong by anyone twenty years ago. So society progresses. Even if the righteousness of any one act be relative from this point of view, nevertheless there is a more ultimate difference of kind between becoming better and becoming worse. Righteousness is progressive. The wicked man, who is better than he was last year, may be more righteous than the very good man who has deteriorated, who is worse than he was last year.”

Although it is superficially treated therein, the Indian student may profitably be directed to the chapter, “The Problem of Evil,” in Rabindranath Tagore’s *Sādhana*,* for a heartening Indian point of view from which to approach this difficulty, which is common to all thinking men. Regarding the problem of suffering, T has found the following argument useful:—“Karma is true. ‘Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.’ But suffering is not for the sake of punishment. It is for the sake of instruction. (See the book of Job). Innocent suffering is usually to instruct society as a whole, not any particular individual. Also all suffering is not evil. For love involves sharing the suffering of others. In this sense God also suffers. The Hindus wished to escape this suffering, which is most God-like,

* *Sādhana*, by Rabindranath Tagore (Macmillan & Co.), p. 45.

as well as the evil. Sometimes the enquirers will not admit that God loves. If He does not, I repeat, it is better to have no God than a god who does not love, and therefore does not help, who makes man a mere plaything, a puppet-show, a Ram Lila."

6. *Transmigration.* This subject follows naturally the one just considered, since the average Hindu student considers that in the doctrine of transmigration the last word has been said in explanation of the presence of evil and suffering in the world. To his eyes the Christian explanation seems entirely inadequate to account for the different stations and fortunes to which men are born into the world. On this subject F writes: "The only effective thought that I know is the idea worked out in *The Crown of Hinduism*, that transmigration is the basis of the whole theory of caste. The modern Hindu does not really believe the fundamental doctrine of caste, and can be made to feel that. Hence he does not really believe in transmigration." "The Hindu holds that caste distinctions have another basis than physical heredity. He declares that each soul is drafted into that caste for which his spiritual progress has prepared him. A man is born a Brahman, because his soul is far advanced on the way to holiness. The Sudra is born such, because he is far behind the Brahman, but far in advance of the soul that is born a Pariah or a *mleccha*. There can be no doubt that it is this idea which throughout the centuries has justified caste to the noblest minds of India. Transmigration is the Hindu doctrine of man. The belief that men rise, through many spiritual stages, to perfection, is to the Hindu the deepest of all facts about the human spirit. . . .

Caste is thus the natural social expression of transmigration.”*.

Note.—Professor J. B. Raju, of St. John's College, Agra, in the course of the Fortnightly Discussions in the College, in March, 1915, dealt exhaustively with the Karma-Transmigration hypothesis, which he held to be both mythical and untenable, failing to establish the justice of God when pushed back to the origin of inequality; and he then urged a truer interpretation of human inequalities along the established scientific lines of biological evolution, his argument culminating in the Christian conception of the one Church, the Body of Christ. We quote the last two paragraphs of the syllabus of the final lecture, which indicate the trend of his thought:

“ The problem of the ethical valuation of the cosmic process. The charge of injustice raised and considered with special reference to the unequal endowments and environments of different individuals. Difficulty traced to radical misconceptions as to the nature of justice and as to the relation of the individual to his environment. Illegitimacy of the concept of individual justice exposed as based on a static and untenable view of individuality. Need for a corporate view of justice based on a revised dynamic view of individuality, which would make it identical with the higher ethical category of love. Consequent revaluation of all values and vindication of the justice and rationality of the cosmic process.

“ Final appeal to the Christian view of the world-process as substantially involving such a conception of the corporate destiny of the world and as conserving at once the individuality of the parts and the unity of the whole, in the glorious and unparalleled Catholic conception of the Church as the Body of God, as a System of systems, as a self-conscious self-determining Unity of self-conscious self-determining unities, as a Person of persons, as an Individual of individuals.”

* *The Crown of Hinduism*, by J. N. Farquhar, M.A. (Oxford Press), p. 179.

A fruitful discussion of this theme will also be found in the issues of *Epiphany* (Oxford Mission, Calcutta), for late July and August, 1915.

7. *The Evils of Christian Nations.*

While not strictly a theological difficulty, this subject properly belongs here, since the Christian doctrine is brought into disrepute among non-Christians because of the Christlessness of so much of Christendom. It customarily replies to questions about the "Christian" sins in the Congo, the Balkans, Europe, etc.:—"There is no Christian nation. There is no nation where a large enough majority are true disciples of Christ to get His principles put into law and action. This also explains the divorce laws of some Western nations."

Why there cannot now be a wholly Christian nation and the significance of that fact, so important in view of the great European conflict, is explained elsewhere by one of the contributors to the Symposium.

"There can be no such thing as a national acceptance of Christ. He cannot be received by men *en masse*. Each soul must turn in its bare individual personality to find union with Him. The only possible cry is :

' Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.'

Hence no existing nation is anything like fully Christian. A certain percentage of the population surrender to Him: others yield only a partial allegiance, and some even consciously oppose Him. The moral and spiritual standard which Christ lays upon the human soul is so high and so exacting that the worldly man rebels, and many seek to belong to Him and yet to escape the more serious aspects of His lordship. Hence no Christian country fully represents Christ. His power

must not be measured by any land. We make fullest confession of all the evils visible in the life of Christian countries in the West. Hindus often write and speak of these things, but they are far more painfully present to the Christian mind. Yet these things do not prove that Christ has failed. The thoughtful man will test Christ not by the Western world as a whole, but by its Christian core, and then he will recognize the constant presence of a high and great type of character, distinguished chiefly by heroic service of mankind and by the full reconciliation of the highest culture the world knows with full faith in Christ.”*

* *The Crown of Hinduism*, p. 62.

CHAPTER VII.

The Final Decision

HERE, more than in any other subject which we have considered, we need to heed the warning conveyed in several of the papers. "The variety of enquirers is so infinite that I doubt if it would be useful to try to systematize the instruction too much" (J). "The birth of a spirit into the Kingdom of God is a thing so ineffable that we cannot point to this or that and say, 'This was the predominating force.' 'The wind bloweth where it listeth.' I do not think that the educated converts who were Hindus in our hostels, and are now Christians, could say to you definitely, 'It was this or that that moved me most.' What I really believe is that knowledge of a Christian personality is the strongest predisposing cause. The main incitement of conversion is contact with real Christian life and worship" (H³). The importance of the last point is further emphasized by others. "Fellowship in Christian life, and experience of its power in others, is the great incitement of conversion" (E). "The most convincing proof is the transformed lives of His true seekers" (C). We shall not soon forget the powerful impression made upon a certain promising enquirer by his first acquaintance with the unique fellowship of a group of Christians meeting regularly for intercessory prayer. The element of prayer and sympathy cannot be emphasized too strongly at this point. As W says, of a certain convinced Hindu enquirer of his acquaint-

ance, "the caste devil holds him fast and only God can help there," and only the prayers of God's children can enable Him to act. What conversion will mean for the enquirer must be understood by the teacher, when he urges that ultimate act. "Without the deepest sympathy with the heart-breaking struggle, which most of our enquirers have to go through, no one should attempt to lead a man to baptism, and if we have led them so far we should never forget what they have left for Christ's sake, and what we must try to be to them for Christ's sake" (S³). "Above all, be sympathetic—even the crudest ideas often mean much to them. We need to remember what it meant when an old idea crumbled, and we need to remember that it cost us nothing to rebuild. It costs all these men hold dear, and only a sympathetic heart can understand and help" (W). But if we must approach the crucial step of baptism with due caution, we must beware, on the other hand, of reading with the enquirer, endlessly and automatically, without any real expectation of a definite result. H² sounds this note of warning:—"One needs to keep constantly before one the conviction of the possibility of the man's conversion just there and then. 'The decisive act can come just here and now.' Else years of work without conversion would result in one's getting utterly vague in one's aim and hitting nothing. One great danger is one's tendency to get perfunctory. The cure is to pray each morning for the men with whom one is going to read; to pray till one cares. *Love, love, love*, is the first and middle and last word, if we would win them: love not only for their souls, but the love that personally serves them, that is never official. I find the Cross my greatest appeal."

In this connection we are reminded of the words of Dr. Stanley White, a Secretary of the American Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, in speaking of the educational work of his church in India, reported at a recent Foreign Missions Conference in New York:—"A teacher in one of the colleges in India told me, in substance, that the Indian students would never be reached *en masse*, nor would they be reached in the class-room, nor by the corporate effort of the Christian Association. The Indian students are eager to talk of things spiritual. It is part of their nature. They cannot, however, be urged into the Kingdom. Their souls must be 'loved out of the pit,' and only by personal contact can a heart be grappled by love. I would say that for the fullest exercise of the evangelism that is possible in connection with educational work, it is vital that this personal touch be established."* Finally, the love that wins will be the Pauline love, that endureth all things, and never faileth. "Hang on eternally—running the race with patience. A friend of mine here is seeing baptism just now as a result of work four or five years ago. In one mission here they have just had the first convert in a village after 30 years of patient effort" (W).

So much for the personal attitude of the teacher, and the importance of Christian character and faith and love and prayer, in bringing conviction to the heart, and decision to the will, of the enquirer, under the guidance of the Spirit. The question remains—What line of teaching has proved successful in bringing to the point of decision the enquirer who is intellectually convinced of the Truth?

* *Report of Foreign Mission Conference of North America, January 14-16, 1914*, p. 125.

If the evidence of Christian experience in the world to-day constitutes a mighty attractive force, so also does the power and beauty of the truth in God's Holy Word. "I always try to use the Gospels as a text to bring home to them the spiritual facts of Christian experience: forgiveness, power over sin, the indwelling Spirit. The Bible interpreted by Christian experience, and Christian experience interpreted by the Bible" (H²). This unique experience is only for those who surrender themselves *fully* to Christ: "The fulness of God's blessing belongs to those who surrender themselves wholly to Him. The riches of the Christian life, the fulfilment of the promises, the constant communion with God, the power of the Holy Spirit, are, to my mind, the strongest inducements, far stronger than commandment and fear" (S³).

But for the convinced, yet hesitant, enquirer this teaching will ultimately focus in the example and claims of Christ, and such a one must be brought to feel that the sacrifice involved is an inalienable accompaniment of the way of the Cross. "Bring to bear all the decisive claims of our Lord; and especially His frank statements of the sacrifice involved" (S¹). "St. Luke 9: 23-26, and such passages" (J). "Christ's commandment is absolutely clear; implicit obedience to the Master must be every disciple's duty, and it implies baptism. Jesus' own example leads us the way of the Cross, through suffering and humiliation to glory and power. To be in His footpath and company can never be a disgrace, however poor the followers may be" (S³). "I pound in constantly that Christ demands all or nothing. Christ's claims to authority are unanswerable, and Christ's life is inexplicable except as the only Son of God" (W).

It may be that the trouble lies less in any fear of consequences, or lack of desire, than the habitual indecision of a will which must be trained to action. For enquirers of this class, P² suggests such books as the Mott-Eddy series of pamphlets for enquirers, and Begbie's *Broken Earthenware*, to which might profitably be added Foster's *Decision of Character*. H emphasizes the use of Mott and Eddy's *Enquirer's Book*, No. 2, and of the argument, "Truth will make you free; convinced, but not acting on it, you are a walking lie." And in a different connection the same writer gives the important counsel, which is applicable here: "United social service with him brings his task home, the need for a certain belief." P¹ gives in a nutshell the (psychologically and Scripturally) sound method to be followed in these—and, indeed, in all—cases. "My system is to plead with a convinced enquirer to follow out Christ's teaching in life. I ask him to read a little every day and to strive with God's help to live up to it, comparing his profession and his practice every evening. Obedience is so essential. If a man does not live up to the light he has, and go forward, he goes back." With obedience must go persistent, progressive prayer. B writes:—"I have used with some effect Mott's reasoning concerning prayer. He says that prayer is to be tested by experiment. A man who has never prayed is perfectly illogical when he says that he does not believe in prayer. Ask a man to pray that the Bible may become a book of plain teaching to him, to pray that God will guide him to the truth, to pray that God will give him strength to obey any Biblical commandment that appeals to him as something that ought to be done." T answers the sincere question, "How can we prove that Christ

gives power ? ” “ Only by trying Him, as you would try a chemical experiment. Also you can pray to God to reveal to you that which is true.” S² writes :—“ As to prayer one cannot over-emphasize the need of *prayerful* study. The true enquirer realizes at once that he is most helpless in solving the greatest of all problems, the problem of God. A timely suggestion to him, therefore, of his absolute dependence on God in prayer, and uniting with him in simple child-like prayer, will be of the utmost value.” Force is lent to the above assertion by the fact that earnest prayer, *as a Muhammadan*, was the first and final cause of the conversion of the author of those words to Christianity.

The negative teaching, which seeks to show the results of dangerous indecision in other lives, is as effective in India as it is everywhere else, since such sorry examples are only too common.

“ I point to the actual results of indecision where a man’s life has been a drifting-match, because he had not been brave enough to face the sacrifice and the great opportunity ” (T). In similar vein, S³ dwells on the result of failure to take the final step of baptism.

“ Baptism should never be discussed with enquirers until they have decided to follow Christ ; then it should be made very clear to them that there is no following Christ without baptism. Sad experience has convinced me that any so-called final decision, even with open confession, nay with family persecution, if not followed by baptism, invariably leads to disappointment. Outside the bond of Christian fellowship, amidst non-Christian surroundings, they may stand for a time, but either drift away and become indifferent or are content with a half-way rest-house. I have been afraid of

pushing anyone beyond his own growth, but looking back I fear that I have not done my duty, and am inclined to warn others against too great caution."

F also seeks to point out to convinced enquirers how impossible history has proved it to be "to live a full Christian life in Hindu society."

A secondary, and yet profoundly unselfish, motive, to which appeal may be made in pressing for a decision, is love of one's family and of one's country. This is to turn stumbling-blocks into stepping-stones, since the enquirer first believes that the interests of love and patriotism are opposed to his accepting Christ. "The enquirer can render no greater service to his country than as a Christian, leading the power of Christ into the national life and helping to make Christianity indigenous in India" (T). "Only the baptized man can do the maximum of Christian service for India" (F). Impressive instances can be cited of personal experiences of converts who have become reconciled to their families, and thus been the means of leading their own loved ones to Christ. This would have been almost impossible for the secret believer. T answers the commonly heard question, "Cannot a secret believer do more to win his family?" "No, I believe not. Practice has shown that those who postpone baptism just drift and never amount to anything. Decision is necessary. The man who puts his hand to the plough must press forward, or he is unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven."

The argument from patriotism can only be used effectively, as F points out, when the enquirer thoroughly understands the universality of truth, and, in particular, of Christ's life and teaching. This will become clearer to Indian eyes in proportion as the Church of Christ

in India becomes less distinctively Western, more truly indigenous. E comments pungently on this unfortunate stumbling-block. "An Indian Church dressed in *topis* and trousers repels. Keep Indian Christians *Indian*. It is thought that we are presenting a European religion, and quite rightly they do not want it, any more than they want a Chinese religion."

A series of Bible readings, which may be useful in answering the honest objections to open confession and baptism, are given by T, who remarks concerning them: "The direct application of several passages to Indian conditions may be made very striking: Matthew 6: 24-33; 8: 17-19; (Luke 9: 57-62); 10: 16-39; (John 12: 24-26); 16: 24-26; (Luke 14: 25-35); 19: 16-30; John 14: 6-24."

CHAPTER VIII.

Literature for the Enquirer

THIS is not the place to emphasize adequately the need of thorough preparation in Christian Doctrine and Biblical Exegesis on the part of the missionary who would lead Indian students to a saving knowledge of Christ. A few quotations along this line, however, may not be amiss. "The worker must be firmly grounded himself. He cannot know the Bible too well. He must be able to turn freely to its teaching on almost any subject. The Apostles' Creed and the Gospels are the best basis—the only practical basis of instruction" (J). "The teacher himself ought to study very seriously, using the best literature in existence, especially commentaries and New Testament Theology" (F). As to what fundamental works of reference the missionary among students should have in his library, for constant use, opinions naturally differ ; but probably a consensus would favour the following :—Bible Dictionary: *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* (5 vols.) ; Commentary on the Bible: *The Expositors' Bible* ; New Testament Introduction and Exegesis (for those knowing Greek), *The Expositors' Greek Testament*. If works of smaller compass are desired, Jacobus' *Standard Bible Dictionary* (1 vol.) and Dummelow's *One Volume Bible Commentary* could be substituted for the two first suggested.

Books lent to the enquirer to read will never take the place of personal teaching with the Bible as the basis, and they should be carefully chosen with definite enquirers in mind. Most of the books needed for

Indian enquirers have yet to be written. "To speak quite frankly, it seems to me that our holy faith is no exception to the law, that religion in the real sense is propagative by *discipleship*. I do not believe that books of any kind can be substituted for personal influence and power. At best they are only supplementary" (J).

"I use few books. The Gospels and life. We have not time to read books with enquirers—it is ours to explain the Gospels: their phrases, not too much of their meaning to us. I have used very few books" (H¹).

"I do all in my power to make them read *with* some Christian. However much God may use the simple Bible, when no living agent is available, I believe His normal way is through the living witness. Else Christ would have dictated a book. Mere book-reading is apt to confirm the Hindu in his view of religion, as a philosophy to be studied rather than lived" (H²). "I have never made much use of books in dealing with enquirers, but I am sure they may be utilized to good purpose when carefully chosen. The difficulty is to get suitable literature, as most available books are written for Christians or men with Western training and temperament. The books should always be short and to the point: big books are seldom read and more seldom understood. There is, indeed, urgent need of short books on the life of Christ, The Christian Way of Salvation, Christ and India, written for Indian educated enquirers" (S³).

"The books explaining Christianity to Hindus have yet to be written. Books accomplish much less than the man" (H²). "It seems to me we badly need books which state clearly what Christianity is, and give good

bold teaching on such subjects as the Bible, the Holy Spirit, Prayer, etc." (P²).

"Do not give them books in which Hinduism and its doctrines are criticised. This only sets up their backs, for, as no Hindus agree as to what Hinduism is, they are sure to think the author unjust. Anything positive which teaches what the Christian faith is is appreciated, e.g., Gore's *Creed of a Christian*" (E).

"One has to suit the book to the student very carefully. The best plan is to read the Bible with a man personally, to allow him to read these other books privately, and then to discuss them with him" (F).

With these preliminary words of caution and counsel, we proceed to consider the books recommended as having actually been found useful:—

1. The Christian Teaching:

The Fact of Christ. P. Carnegie Simpson (mentioned nearly by half of the correspondents, though F remarks concerning it: "A very difficult book for the ordinary student"; and H¹ writes: "I have not found *The Fact of Christ* useful"). Hodder & Stoughton, 1s.

Teachings of Christ. Guild Series

Teachings of Jesus. Macnicol

The Natural Law in the Spiritual World. Drummond. 3s. 6d.

Verbum Dei. R. F. Horton

Creed of a Christian. Gore. Wells, Darton, Gardner & Co., London, 1s. 6d.

Christian Evidences. Gore. 1s.

The Sermon on the Mount. Gore. John Murray, London, 1s. *Evidences of Christianity.* Turton. 2s. 6d.

2. The Christian Character:

Life of Christ. Stalker. Association Press, Re. 1-12

The Character of Jesus. Bushnell. Association Press, Rs. 2

The Character of Christ. Robinson. Longmans, Green & Co., 6d.

The Manhood of the Master. H.E. Fosdick. Association Press, cloth, Rs. 1-4 ; paper, As. 10

The Christian Character. Illingsworth. Macmillan & Co., London, 6s.

The Fight for Character. H. C. King. C.L.S., Madras, An. 1

Decision of Character. Foster. Association Press, As. 4

Letters to His Friends. Forbes Robinson. Association Press, Re. 1-14

The Marks of a Man. R. E. Speer. Association Press, Re. 1-14

Christian Biography, and especially *Young Men Who Overcame*, Speer. Association Press, Rs. 3-2

Life of Kali Charan Banerji. Barber. Association Press, As. 6

Pilgrim's Progress. Bunyan. Religious Tract Society, London, 1s.

Les Misérables. Hugo. Ginn and Co., London, 3s. 6d.

3. Christianity in Action:

<i>Twice Born Men</i>	}	Begbie.
<i>Souls in Action</i>		Hodder & Stoughton, London, 2s.
<i>Broken Earthenware</i>		" " " 6s.
<i>Other Sheep</i>		

The Empire of Christ. B. Lucas. Macmillan and Co., London, 2s. 6d.

Social Service, Study and Exhibits. Association Press, paper, As. 10 ; cloth Re. 1-4

Suggestions for Social Helpfulness. D. J. Fleming. Natesan and Co., Madras, As. 8

Up from Slavery. B. T. Washington. Nelson & Sons, London, 1s.

The Man Farthest Down. B. T. Washington. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 6s.

Thinking Black. Dan Crawford. Morgan & Scott, London, 7s. 6d.

4. The Life of the Spirit:

" Devotional books of many types may be used with very good results" (F). " Devotional literature is often acceptable, specially for the personal, mystical type" (S³).

The Imitation of Christ. Á Kempis. Blackie & Sons, London, 2s. 6d.

Holy Living and Holy Dying. Jeremy Taylor. George Bell & Sons, London, 3s. 6d.

Confessions. St. Augustine. J. M. Dent & Sons, London, 1s.
Helps for the Tempted. A. R. Wells. Association Press, As. 4
The Greatest Thing in the World, etc. Drummond. Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1s.

The Practice of the Presence of God. Brother Lawrence. Fleming H. Revell & Co., London, 4d.

Remember Jesus Christ. R. E. Speer. Association Press, Rs. 2
Great Souls at Prayer. Samuel Bagsber & Sons, London, 3s. 6d.

Prayer. L. P. Larsen. Association Press, As. 6

Prayer. M. McGuyon, 1s.

Prayers. Oxford Mission, Calcutta.

With Christ in the School of Prayer. Andrew Murray. Association Press, Calcutta, As. 14

The Secret Prayer Life. The Morning Watch. J. R. Mott. Association Press, Calcutta, An. 1

Daily Light for Daily Needs. An Indian edition of selections from some of the classic Christian books of devotion, with introductory notes, has been projected and should be exceedingly useful when published.

5. Christian Apologetics :

"Western Apologetics are, to my mind, very seldom suited to Indian readers, and we are still waiting for Indian Apologetics" (S³).

(a) For Hindus—

The Crown of Hinduism. Farquhar. Oxford University Press, London, 7s. 6d. Association Press, cloth, Rs.6-8; Indian Edition, Re. 1-8

Gita and Gospel. Farquhar. Association Press, As. 6

Age and Origin of the Gita. Farquhar. Association Press, 1 pice.

Karma and Redemption. Hogg. Association Press, As. 8

"Very difficult" (T).

Higher Hinduism. Slater. 3s. 6d.

Oneness with God. Larsen. Association Press, As. 2

The Epiphany, published every Saturday by the Oxford Mission, Calcutta, As. 4 per annum

(b) For Muhammadans—

Sirat ul Mustaqim. J. Takle. C. L. S., Madras, As. 4

Ghulam Jabbar's Renunciation. W. Goldsack. C. L. S., Madras, As. 6

Mizan-ul-Haqiq. C. G. Pfander. Translated and edited by Tisdall

Food for Reflection. 'Abd 'Isa. C. L. S., Madras, As. 8

"It would be helpful to a Muhammadan enquirer to study a 'Life of Muhammad' by a Christian writer as well as one by a non-apologetic Muhammadan writer" (S²).

(c) **The Historicity of Christ**—C. L. S., Madras, 1 pice

The Historic Christ. (An open Letter to the Thinking Men of Calcutta). Farquhar. Association Press

(d) **The Scientific View-point—**

The Ascent Through Christ. E. Griffith-Jones. Hodder & Stoughton, London, 2s.

Science and Religion, by Seven Men of Science. 2s.

"Each worker ought to keep by him a supply of Manley's *The Views of Modern Science* (C. M. S.), to stop the mouths of atheists and agnostics" (F).

"I have not found any book which I think states a modern Christian position based on science. The professors of the Ewing Christian College try to use the very text-books they are teaching, especially in Economics, Ethics and Biology, to show the necessity and scientific accuracy and efficiency of Christ's principles" (T).

6. Commentaries on the Bible :

The College St. Matthew. Farquhar. Association Press, As. 4, The only scholarly commentary for Indian college student enquirers yet published. Others, greatly needed, are in course of preparation.

Of *Luke* and *Acts*, by G. S. Eddy, Association Press, As. 4 each, so much used with Christian students, S³ writes that he has used them for beginners, but "only in class work, for examination purposes, have I found that they were really studied."

Commentary on St. John's Gospel, Westcott, has been used by P².

The Cambridge Bible for Schools, used by F and P².

The Scotch Handbooks for Bible Classes, "with students who are really keen" (F).

The Westminster New Testament, for advanced students. Andrew Melrose, London, 2s. Association Press, cloth, Re. 1-12 each

H¹ concludes—"If a student is keen at all, encourage him to get a simple commentary for himself, e.g., Farquhar on *Matthew* : not our Western study text-books."



10

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PAMPHLET BINDER

 Syracuse, N. Y.
 Stockton, Calif.

BW7470 .S9W2
Handbook of work with student enquirers
Princeton Theological Seminary—Speer Library



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